

CREATING A MOTIVATING CLIMATE FOR STUDENTS IN PE

Vallerand (1997) proposed that motivation is influenced by a number of social factors, which in turn, has important cognitive, affective, and behavioural consequences. There are numerous social factors in PE which can play an important role in determining student motivation. PE teachers can be more aware and manipulate these social factors to increase student motivation.

1) Use Cooperation rather than Competition

Motivational climates which emphasise cooperation bring students together to help each other learn and improve. Cooperation makes an activity inherently more interesting whereas competition among students can undermine their intrinsic motivation toward the activity. In contrast, comparative criteria (e.g., being first) are more difficult to meet and can undermine perceptions of competence and intrinsic interest in an activity.

2) Provide Choices

A PE teacher who provides choice of tasks, allow for students' involvement in the design of tasks, give them leadership roles and decision-making opportunities, will foster a sense of ownership in the learning process and make the students more responsible for their own learning.

3) Make your Students Feel Competent

In PE the role of perceived competence is crucial, because some students do not have any prior experience with most or all sport activities (Papaioannou, 1994). Therefore, those with prior experience who feel and are physically competent are more likely to find PE interesting and fun, and want to participate in it to further develop their sport skills. However, those who perceive that they lack physical competence usually find the PE experience meaningless, and engage in it only because it is the rule or because of fear of punishment (Ntoumanis, 2001). Also, a motivational climate which employs self-referenced criteria (e.g., improvement of individual performance levels) to judge the degree of student improvement will foster perceived competence and self-determined forms of motivation, because it will reduce the controlling nature of interpersonal comparison (Ames, 1992).

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